

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 6
1201 ELM STREET, SUITE 500
DALLAS, TEXAS 75270

Office of the Regional Administrator

August xx, 2020

Dr. Chuck Carr Brown, Secretary
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
Post Office Box 4314
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4314

RE: Completion of Ambient Air Monitoring in the Neighborhoods Surrounding the Denka
Performance Elastomer Facility in LaPlace, LA

Dear Dr. Brown:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) thanks you and your staff for your support during our ambient air monitoring program in the neighborhoods surrounding the Denka Performance Elastomer facility (Denka) in LaPlace, LA over the past four years (2016-2020). During this time, we have collected over 2,500 samples to monitor the concentrations of chloroprene in the ambient air.

EPA's air monitoring data from the Community Air Monitoring Program, implemented in LaPlace since 2016, shows the annual average ambient air concentrations of chloroprene near the Denka facility in 2019 (after Denka's implementation of chloroprene emission control measures) was 0.5-2.3 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, depending upon the location of the monitor. This annual average would be lower but for occasional elevated concentrations that contribute to the average.

As such, EPA recently began the SPod Air Monitoring Program (March 2020) to help identify the root causes of any elevated chloroprene emissions at the facility and to help identify opportunities to reduce short- and long-term ambient air concentrations of chloroprene. We are completing the Initial Phase of the SPod monitoring program by September 1, 2020. The Initial Phase includes calibration of the instruments, collection and processing of data to assess the sampling equipment performance, and development of VOC trigger concentrations and averaging periods for canister samples at each of the six locations. The Operational Phase for the SPods will begin with completion of the Initial Phase and chloroprene data from the SPod monitoring program will be posted publicly at: [HYPERLINK "<https://www.epa.gov/la/denka-air-monitoring-data-summary>"].

As we were delayed in completing the Initial Phase of the SPod monitoring program due to the pandemic, EPA extended the community ambient air monitoring work from the end of June 2020 and plans to remove the community air monitoring network at the end of September 2020. The SPod monitoring program is expected to continue operation through about December 2020. Upon conclusion of the monitoring programs, EPA will be preparing summary reports highlighting the activities and results associated with each monitoring program.

We appreciate your assistance with our ambient air monitoring activities in LaPlace, and thank you for your continued work in promoting a healthy and safe environment in the LaPlace community and in the State of Louisiana.

Sincerely,

Ken McQueen
Regional Administrator